

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 USSS-00 SY-04 INRE-00 SSO-00

NSCE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0661

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 4209

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PO PINS

SUBJ: PLOT TO ASSASSINATE PRIME MINISTER GONCALVES RUMORED

1. O SEUCLO IN ITS EDITION TODAY CARRIES A STATEMENT FROM THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT REGARDING THE ALLEGED CONSPIRACY TO "STOP THE DEOMCRATIC PROCESS OF THE COUNTRY". STATEMENT SAYS THAT AMONG THOSE PERSONS ARRESTED BY COPCON WERE CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS WHO WERE TO HAVE CAUSED "GRAVE DISTURBANCES TO PUBLIC ORDER, INCLUDING ASSASSINATION ATTEMPTS AGAINST PROMINENT PERSONALITIES IN THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT AND IN THE AFM".

2. EXPRESSO ARTICLE WHICH APPEARED TODAY CLAIMED THAT AN ATTEMPT ON THE LIFE OF PRIME MINISTER GONCALVES WAS PLANNED FOR THE NIGHT OF SEPTEMBER 27 BY A GROUP KNOWN AS M.A.P. (MOVIMENTO DE ACCAO PORTUGUESA) HEADED BY PROF. GUILHERME BRAGA DA CRUZ (FORMER MEMBER OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE UNIAO NACIONAL AND COIMBRA LAW PROFESSOR) AND WHICH INCLUDED ALBERTO CORREIA DE BARROS, LUIS DE SENA ESTEVES, AND RODRIGO EMILIO RIBEIRO DE MELO. THIS GROUP HAD RENTED A HOUSE ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE AND WAS TO HAVE SHOT THE PM AS WALKED UP HIS FRONT STEPS. ARMED FORCES ARE ALLEGED TO HAVE DETAINED SEVEN PERSONS INVOLVED AND SEIZED FILES, A TELESCOPIC RIFLE, AND PLANS FOR THE CONFIDENTIAL

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ASSASSINATION. IN ADDITION TO THE PM, EXPRESSO ALLEGES THAT

SPINOLA AND MELO ANTUNES WERE TO HAVE BEEN KILLED ALSO. NONE OF THE RINGLEADERS OF THE MAP HAS BEEN PICKED UP ACCORDING TO THE NEWSPAPER.

3. EMBOFF CONTACTED BY TWO LEADERS OF THE RIGHTIST PARTIDO DE PROGRESSO (PP) 1700 SEPT 30. THESE INDIVIDUALS WERE ASKED IF THEY HAD ANY KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUPPOSED PLOT TO ASSASSINATE THE PRIME MINISTER. THEY INDICATED THAT THE PLOT WAS NOT CONCOCTED BY THE LEFT TO SERVE AS A PRETEXT TO OUST THE PRESIDENT BUT IN FACT WAS GENUINE. ACCORDING TO THEM THE PRIME MINISTER WAS TO HAVE BEEN SHOT BY MAP (WHICH THEY SAID HAD 12 MEMBERS, 7 OF WHOM WERE EX-COMMANDOS) AT 0300 LOCAL SEPT 28. THE TWO PP LEADERS SAID THE OWNER OF THE HOUSE FROM WHICH THE SHOT WAS TO HAVE BEEN FIRED IS RUI ALVIM. (A CHECK OF THE PHONE BOOK SHOWS THAT ONE RUI PEREIRA ALVIM IN FACT OWNS OR RENTS THE HOUSE ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE PM'S AT RUA BORGES CARNEIRO 42, 1ST FLOOR).

4. THE TWO PP LEADERS ARE LEAVING THE CITY AND CLAIM THAT WHILE THE PP HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE ASSASSINATION PLOT THEY FEEL IT PRUDENT TO GO UNDERGROUND. THEY SAY THAT THE PARTY HAS BURNED ITS FILES AND GONE INTO HIDING.

5. COMMENT: ASIDE FROM FACT EXPRESSO IS USUALLY RELIABLE, CONFIRMATION BY PP MEMBERS WHO HAVE NOTHING TO GAIN (AND WHOSE RIGHIST CAUSE HAS SOMETHING TO LOSE) FROM REVELATIONS GIVES SOME CREDENCE TO PLOT STORY.

EXISTENCE OF A GENUINE PLOT WOULD ALSO PROVIDE GREATER JUSTIFICATION FOR AFM AND LEFT-OF-CENTER PARTY MOVES TO PREVENT SEPTEMBER 28 RALLY.
SCOTT

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